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ABSTRACT

A seminar was held to review early childhood objectives in the context of accountability and to discuss ways to translate these objectives into a practical form. An introductory session listed basic principles underlying early childhood care and education at New Zealand's Trust centers. Subsequent presentations provided: (1) a literature review of national and international objectives of early childhood education and care; (2) a discussion of curriculum objectives in early childhood education; (3) a discussion of principles behind the development of objectives; and (4) a description of Te Kohanga Reo, a total immersion program for Maori preschoolers that is organized by the Maori community and in which Maori is spoken. Notes on group discussions are provided. Also included is a statement on the curriculum in early childhood education, subsections of which provide a definition and a list of 15 basic principles. (RH)

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OBJECTIVES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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PREFACE

This seminar, *Objectives of Early Childhood Education and Care*, was organized in response to a request from the Advisory Committee of NZCER's Families and Early Childhood Programme. The purpose of the seminar was to look at early childhood objectives in the context of accountability, and to discuss how to translate them into a practical form.

The seminar was planned prior to the publication of *Tomorrows Schools* and *Education to Be More*. However, these two reports gave the seminar added significance and helped the participants form ideas as to what should be included in National Guidelines for Early Childhood Education and Care. Recommendations from the seminar were sent subsequently to the Minister of Education through NZCER's Families and Early Childhood Advisory Committee.

OBJECTIVES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

PROGRAMME

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MORNING SESSION:

Helen May - Introduction

Val Podmore - Objectives of Early Childhood Education and Care: Where does the literature lead us?

Maris O'Rourke - Processes when forming curriculum Principles

Anne Meade - National Guidelines: What and Why?

- National Guidelines, Charters, and Licences

Val Burns - Questions to Consider; Choices Involved

Henrietta Maxwell - The Kohanga Reo View

Chair: Margery Renwick

12:15 p.m. Lunch

AFTERNOON SESSION:

1:15 p.m. Cathy Wylie - Where to from here?

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Small group discussion

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Report back and conclusions.

Chair: Val Podmore

SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

* Trix Bradley (Department of Health), *Jenny Young-Loveridge (Department of Education, University of Canterbury), Judy Courtenay (N.Z. Playcentre Federation), Jenny Miller (Hutt Valley Playcentre Association), Carmen Dalli (Victoria University of Wellington), *Anne Meade (Prime Minister's Department), Janet McCallum (Wellington Combined Childcare Association), Joan Pitches (New Zealand Childcare Association), Maggie Haggerty (Wellington College of Education), *Colin Knight (Christchurch Teachers College), Maris O'Rourke (Department of Education, Auckland), * Val Burns, Eddie Clark (Department of Education, Head Office), Jo Jenks (Early Childhood Workers Union & Wellington Combined Childcare Association), Pam Cubey (Wellington College of Education), Pam Molony (Barnardos New Zealand, National Office), Linda Mitchell (Kindergarten Teachers Association), Clare Wells (Kindergarten Teachers Association), Sandie Aitkin (New Zealand Educational Institute), Katherine Baxter (N.Z. Childcare Association), Michael Mintrim (Treasury), Henrietta Maxwell (Te Kohanga Reo Trust), Karena Clark (Maori Women's Welfare League), Helen Bernstone (Wellington College of Education), Nancy Bell (Massey University), *Margery Renwick (NZCER), *Cathy Wylie (NZCER), Nena Benton (NZCER), Ian Livingstone (NZCER), *Geraldine McDonald (NZCER), Lynne Smith (NZCER), *Val Podmore (NZCER).

Apologies

Marilyn Davies (Employers' Federation), Barbara Keddy (State Services Commission), Barbara Crabtree (Palmerston North Teachers College), Mary-Anne Thompson (N.Z. Institute for Economic Research), Bernice Lindegren (N.Z. Free Kindergarten Union), Sandy Bain (NZFKU), Angela Foulkes (Combined Trade Unions), June Vize (NZCER), Barbara Craig (NZCER), Susi Easting, Joy Anderson, Penny Fenwick (Ministry of Women's Affairs), Kathie Irwin, Lisa Bird (Victoria University), *Pae Ruha (Te Kohanga Reo Trust), Peggy Luke (Te Kohanga Reo Trust), *Anne Smith (University of Otago), Paul Wilson (N.Z. Licensed Childcare Centres Federation), Margaret Richards, Glennie Oborn (Kindercare Learning Centres Ltd.), Patrick van Berkel (Montessori Association of N.Z. Inc.), H. Von Florenstein-Nulder (Rudolph Steiner College of Teachers), Carol

Garden, Frances Smith, and Rachel Barrett-Douglas (District Office, Early Childhood Division, Department of Education).

*Member of NZCER's Families and Early Childhood Advisory Committee.

AN INTRODUCTION TO OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

Helen May

Hamilton Teachers College

Welcome to this seminar today on behalf of the NZCER Families and Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee. The idea for this seminar originally arose out of a concern to define the objectives of ECCE in New Zealand. There were and still are, political and economic reasons why this was important. We have been, and still are, asking for considerable increases in ECCE funding from the public purse. This, however, was not the only reason. There was also a need to clarify things we intuitively believed in but have never codified. At the last Advisory Committee meeting we started to ask such questions as:

- in what ways is NZ ECCE distinctive?
- how does ECCE differ from other educational sectors in N.Z?
- How do you assess the aims of ECCE?
- What are the cultural and societal values in which ECCE is set?

At the time of our last meeting the Picot Report had just been released and the Task Force for the Meade report was meeting. Terms such as 'charters' and 'national guidelines' and 'accountability' were being used. Since the release in September, of *Education to be More* (The Meade report), such issues have landed firmly in front of us to be addressed with some urgency as the deadline of October 1989 looms ahead. The Advisory Committee see this forum as an opportunity for an internal launching of discussions on the National Guidelines for ECCE. These are going to be one of the crucial mechanisms for not only establishing minimum standards but also reflecting the national objectives of ECCE in NZ.

I have been giving the question of where the National Guidelines originate from some thought. Can they be generated from a group such as this, with its representations from ECCE organizations along with people with professional expertise? Or do they generate upwards from parents or workers in ECCE?

To begin things today from a grassroots perspective, I will report briefly on a combined parents and staff meeting of about 50 people from the Hamilton Daycare Centre Trust last Thursday. This was an interesting meeting, as it is the first I've known of where parents and staff really addressed politics and educational issues. Usually such meetings are social or to do

with working bees. At the meeting there was some sharing of the contents of the report; there was a presentation of some financial scenarios for both the parents and staff, as well as some discussion on possible administrative scenarios for our Trust. Then, we tried to confirm some of the basic principles underlying the ECCE provision at the Trust centres. This was the list that emerged.

- that there be provision for under 2s;
- that existing staffing levels above the current regulations were important. As one parent said, 'It's why I pay to come to (the name of one of our centres)';
- that there be places for children with special needs.
For example a 2 year old child has recently become an epileptic but it is important to his parents that he can continue in the centre;
- that the centre employ trained staff and that staff have access to ongoing training;
- that there be some way of funding those parents in financial need.
At present the Trust can offer limited subsidies in cases where the social welfare subsidies can't be applied;
- that wages of staff continue to move towards the kindergarten wage levels;
- that there be more provision of childcare in Hamilton;
- that there be both a home based and centre based option available.
(We currently run a Family Daycare scheme);
- that the length of the day not be cut back i.e. from 7:30 - 5:15. This allows a considerable range of working options for parents.

This is no definitive list. There are gaps and other things that are important. However, there were connections between the issues our parents and staff were defining as immediately important to them, and some of the things that need to be in the national guidelines.

For example,

- industrial issues i.e. unified salary levels;
- minimum standards in terms of staff ratios, qualifications;
- quality issues in terms of training;
- financial weighting in terms of age, special needs, length of day;
- equity issues;
- choice, diversity;
- a rationale for extending provision.

There will be many more things that arise, but the process seemed to be one of developing guidelines that can protect the needs of children, balance

the interest of parents and families with that of staff, staff as well as acknowledging the interests of our cultures, our communities and our state.

Having started the dialogue at our centre, the concept and importance of national guidelines seemed clearer. The task seemed very real, and I look forward to the following speakers, and the discussions this afternoon. I am here looking for ideas to feed into our dialogue/negotiations just beginning back home.

OBJECTIVES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: WHERE DOES THE LITERATURE LEAD US?

Valerie Podmore, NZCER

Introduction:

This literature review was initiated at the request of the Advisory Committee of the Families and Early Childhood Programme (November 1987 meeting). Information collected on the objectives of early childhood education includes overseas research and position papers, and New Zealand published papers documents and discussion material.

Summary of the International Papers on Objectives:

The more recent international material on objectives addresses a selection of issues or concerns, including:

- hothousing;
- the erosion of childhood;
- compensatory education, quality of programmes;
- the needs of children and families.

In addition, some writers and groups have published specific sets of objectives for early childhood education. This work tends to focus on the developmental needs of children.

Hothousing refers to the structured stimulation of young children, or to the pressure to accelerate early achievement (e.g. Gallagher & Coche, 1987; Hills, 1987; Partridge, 1986). In the U.S.A., parents' anxiety about their very young children's academic achievement, working parents, and media pressure, all contribute to "hothousing" and the need for early childhood educators to re-examine the objectives of their programmes. Concern about young children's development in the socio-emotional domain has been stimulated by the hothousing debate.

The *erosion of childhood* is related to some extent to the hothousing issue. Jones (1980) has pointed out that play and laughter are important components of young children's learning processes. Hills has commented that social observers and educators are concerned about

> the 'disappearance of childhood', (which) suggests a denial that legitimate, culturally accepted differences exist along the developmental path from infancy to adulthood. (Hills, 1987, p. 266).

Suransky has stated more emphatically that

> It is the children, not alien institutional structures of the corporate or bureaucratic world, who can best teach us how to design intimate childcare landscapes that do not erode their life-world. (Suransky, 1982, p. 202).

Compensatory education and the long-term benefits of early childhood education is another theme evident in the literature from the U.S.A. One example of this work is Lazar and Darlington's (1982) longitudinal research concerned with the lasting effects of early education.

Weikart's longitudinal study of disadvantaged children has also described long-term effects of pre-school experience, not only on educational achievement, but also on employment, delinquency, teenage pregnancy, and financial considerations (Weikart, 1978, 1987). In examining the issues concerned with long-term effects of pre-school experiences, Zimiles (1986) has highlighted the importance of programme quality, individual children's vulnerability, and family needs. These factors are seen as very relevant when developing early educational objectives.

Debate about the needs of children is certainly prominent in the British literature on the objectives of early childhood education (Curtis, 1986-a, 1986-b, Woodhead, 1987). Several writers there have emphasized the importance of considering both children's and parents' or families' needs (James, 1984, Pugh & De'ath, 1984).

Finally, some educators overseas have outlined the specific objectives of early childhood programmes. A number of writers focus on particular philosophies, and Malloy's (1974) book on the Montessori approach is an example of this work. There is also some evidence of integrated, global approaches to formulating sets of objectives for early childhood education.

The Swedish Institute, for example, has published a set of objectives compiled for all of the pre-schools in Sweden. Pre-schools there are expected to 'contribute to a secure, stimulating environment' and 'act as a complement to what the home can offer'. The pre-schools are required, in co-operation with parents, to pursue education and activities designed to:

> * support and stimulate children's learning ability and social, emotional, motor, linguistic and intellectual development.

> * strengthen children's social, linguistic and cultural identity, and at the same time to pass on their cultural heritage and widen their experiences and knowledge about the world around them.
> * provide good and safe care while parents work or study.
> * raise children in a democratic spirit for solidarity and responsibility and lay the foundation for the will to participate in and influence the development of society.
> (Swedish Institute, 1987, p. 2)

The Swedish statement also emphasizes that pre-school activities need to be well planned and based on the children's life situation, interests, experiences, and special needs. Another stated principle is that children learn through play and work by discovery, exploration, and cultivating their own impressions and experiences.

In the U.S.A., the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has developed a statement on early childhood practice that is sometimes quoted in New Zealand. The NAEYC has defined types of practices that are appropriate and inappropriate for children at different stages (or 'milestones') of development from birth to 8 years (Bredekamp, 1986). Specific guidelines are given for the education and care of children aged 0 to 3 and 4 to 5 years. A position statement from the NAEYC, published in the Australian Journal of Early Childhood, includes some integrated objectives for early childhood education. The NAEYC believes that

> a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. ... a major determinant of program quality is the extent to which knowledge of child development is applied in program practices - the degree to which the program is developmentally appropriate (NAEYC, 1987, p. 36).

Summary of New Zealand Material:

Moving on to New Zealand, early childhood education and care has recently been defined as

> education, care, and learning that occurs in a safe and healthy environment, that involves parents to some degree ..., and develops the potential and quality of life of young children in the present and for the future.
> (Report of the Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group, 1988, p. 6)

The present paper is concerned mainly with the education and care of young children that is not provided solely by parents, and it includes literature about children from birth to 6 years, with some references to children aged up

to 8 years. Some themes evident in the New Zealand early childhood education objectives material include:

- quality of programmes;
- bi-culturalism and catering for diversity;
- accountability.

Several researchers have studied the quality of care in childcare and other early childhood programmes (e.g. Farquhar, 1987, Meade, 1987). Anne Meade, drawing on her N.Z. research, Weikart's longitudinal study in the U.S.A., and Sylva's work in Britain, has commented that quality programmes for young children are ones where the children frequently take initiatives, while the staff plan, evaluate and provide 'a rich language interchange' (Meade, 1987, p. 7). For many researchers and policy makers here, provision of quality programmes is a central objective.

Some New Zealand writers have stated that another objective of early childhood education is to promote the well-being of families. Anne Smith (1988), who has commented on cognitive and social goals for early childhood 'educare' centres, has also pointed out that centres support families:

> Early childhood centres can enrich family life because they can provide both mothers or fathers and children with spells away from each other which can mean a better quality of parent-child relations when families are together.
> Most early childhood centres have as one of their aims helping families. (Smith, 1988, p. 229)

Recent papers concerned with establishing objectives for early childhood education have a bicultural flavour. The Australian and New Zealand Conference on the First Years of School's working document contains a brief paragraph on Maori perspectives, which states that schools must take account of Maori children's 'educational needs, learning styles, interests and strengths'. There is mention too, of the importance of Maori language maintenance for children in transition from Te Kohanga Reo to school and of 'all New Zealand children's gaining knowledge, understanding and appreciation of contemporary and traditional Maori society.' (Australia and New Zealand Conference on the First Years of School, 1988, p. 7).

Two early childhood in-service courses, held in Auckland, have generated statements about goals and objectives. The courses were convened to establish sets of objectives for centre based early childhood care and education and for the curriculum. Goal statements formulated at the 1984 course included an emphasis on families' rights to choose from diverse services; the relevance of the whanau concept; equitable funding; the right of access to all families

including families with special needs; the need for a common core in training to promote skilled, competent care; status, renumeration, and career structure considerations for staff; community and state accountability of state supported services; and strategies to ease transition to primary school. The 14 aims developed also showed a concern with diversity and equity.

The more recent report, prepared by participants at a Lopdell Centre course in March 1988, describes 15 basic principles for an early childhood curriculum. (Report of the Lopdell Centre Course Participants, 1988; see also Maris O'Rourke's paper here).

Another theme evident in recent New Zealand documents is accountability. Current statements concerned with the administration of schools place considerable emphasis on accountability (Report of the Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988; Rt. Hon. David Lange, 1988). *Tomorrow's Schools* states that there will be national guidelines for education, and at the local level, the institution's charter will be developed within the overall national guidelines for education. In the case of early childhood centres, the 15th principle for the curriculum states broadly that "people are accountable" (Report of the Lopdell Centre Course Participants, 1988, p. 4). Accountability, objectives, national guidelines, and charters are examined in detail in the Report of the Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group (1988; see also Anne Meade's paper).

In summary, there have been several moves towards establishing overall goals and national curriculum objectives for early childhood education and care. The New Zealand research literature, policy documents, and reports related to the objectives of early childhood education and care lead us into some important concerns, including: quality of early education and care; biculturalism and the rights of the tangata whenua; diversity and the needs of children, families and communities; and accountability.

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CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Maris O'Rourke

I'd like to begin by telling you about the Lopdell course last February which produced this almost famous document (attached).

Initially I didn't want to 'lead' this course but as it turned out I was the 'right' person.

A group were brought together in a way which bore no resemblance to the usual procedure - thank goodness. They represented all early childhood education in a meta-level way and had a diverse range of backgrounds, ethnicity, etc. More importantly there was a strong group of tangata whenua which rooted all the proceedings firmly in New Zealand and gave a depth, rightness and feeling of spirituality which we all were aware of or became aware of, and appreciated.

The majority of course members had planned to spend different amounts of time at the course. As well as that things came in over the top. I decided this was how it was meant to be, and so for example, when Wellington was fog-bound on the Monday, when someone had to go to a tangi, and so on, I accepted all that, and we formed and reformed the group <u>every time</u> anyone arrived or left.

We would come together and each tell the newcomer(s) where we were up to or each tell those leaving what it had meant to have them there. Then we would sing.

More on all this later, as it turned out to be a very significant part of the process.

On the Monday afternoon as part of the welcomes, introductions, why I think I'm here, etc. I put up the course objectives for consideration. There was an immediate negative reaction to the word <u>curriculum</u>.

I always go where the energy is so we explored this for the rest of the day.

People said what it meant for them, what it meant in relation to ECE and so on. We eventually arrived at a long approximation of a 'definition' which included all sorts of belief and value statements and some descriptions of what an ECE curriculum is not (such as a course of study, etc.).

This all took a long time.

A group of intelligent, aware women - who had been in ECE for a very long time - had a lot of difficulty deciding what a curriculum for ECE was.

The statement stayed up and all week people edited, changed, crossed out, talked, worked, got into little groups and reworked the statement, etc. and by Friday it was theirs. They owned it.

It was honed down to the very core and essence of what curriculum in ECE is.

It reads: AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM

> The curriculum is the sum total of all children's direct and indirect learning experiences in early childhood settings.
>
> Developing the curriculum involves deciding what these experiences will be.

***

A simple elegant statement like that is not easy to arrive at and my questions now would be: Can it be transferred as is to others? Will it be accepted? Or does real psychological ownership require the working through and acceptance process?

Many of the group commented on and laughed about how everyone was using the word curriculum easily and often by the end of the week after an initially hostile and negative reaction on Monday.

On the Tuesday I had put on the 'programme' to look at what each of Maori, Pacific Island or Pakeha curriculum would look like and what did that therefore tell us?

I felt relaxed about whether or not that would occur and didn't approach anyone to do anything.

When we came together in the morning the Samoans had themselves organized and after Karakia did a beautiful and moving presentation of what curriculum meant to them and how they then translated that into practice in their daily programme in their Pacific Island language nest in Mangere.

Then Georgina Kerr and Kahu Katene moved in and worked through for us how they were working with a Maori group in Raglan and then with perfect timing the Wellington people, including Te Kohanga Reo, arrived at lunchtime - the fog had lifted! Patsy Puketapu and Peggy Luke gave an incredibly informative and interesting session on Te Kohanga Reo as part of their arrival, welcome, introductions, etc. This took us through to afternoon tea. At this point Sarah Mulheron and others asked me who was doing the Pakeha

curriculum and I smiled and said 'you I expect'. When I then explained that I hadn't asked anyone to do anything all day and that members had taken that responsibility on themselves and combined to present something they all looked distinctly panicky.

The way they dealt with it was interesting and an excellent example of the cultural difference. There was a longish silence, then each of the pakehas did their own individual thing for each individual type of service - junior school, kindergarten, playcentre, childcare and so on. In summing up the day we saw that there were clearly real cultural differences. There were also some common core elements which it was obviously important to provide for all children.

We began to work on these. People worked when they wanted to and on whatever part they were interested in - some moved from group to group, others stayed with their particular thing. I as a participant stayed with the principles all the way through.

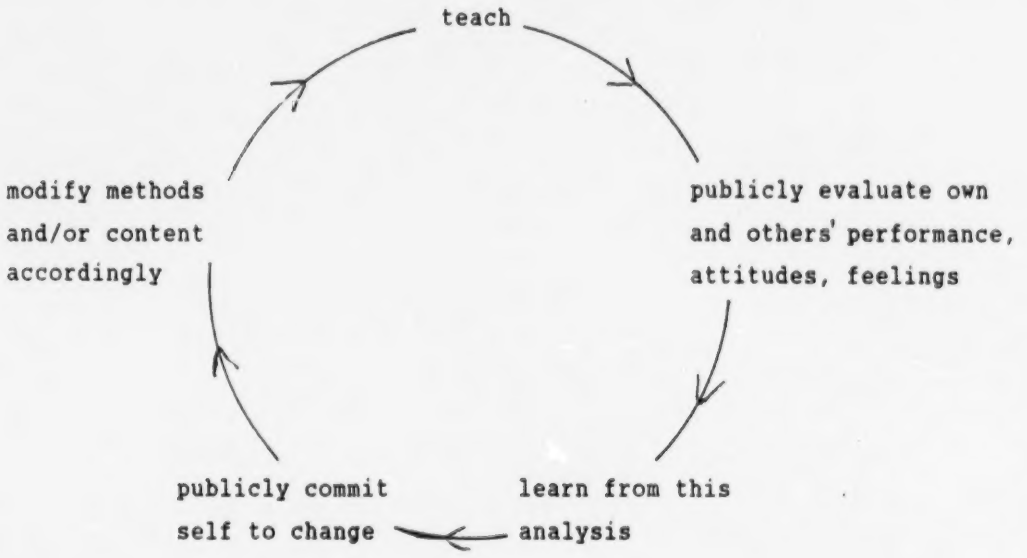
When I took the leadership role it was to facilitate the coming together for welcomes and farewells every time someone came or went. I said earlier I would talk about this again and how important it was.

Some of you will know my Ph.D. work but I'll briefly review part of it as it turned out to be relevant.

I found that people learned when we used the following method:

- a curriculum negotiated and re-negotiated to the learners' current needs/problems;
- data collected in class on our:
  - feelings
  - attitudes
  - beliefs
  - behaviours, etc.;
- data collected in our setting by ourselves and others;
- the class as a setting for public scrutiny and sharing of findings;
- the class as a setting for public commitment to change;
- setting of goals and standards and learning skills required;
- practice in analogue situations; and assessment of progress;
- practice in own setting.

And that a cycle of behaviour like this:


teach
publicly evaluate own and others' performance, attitudes, feelings
learn from this analysis
publicly commit self to change
modify methods and/or content accordingly

Operated as a continual/continuous problems solving mode.

Further, I began to operate in this continual/continuous problem-solving mode in other settings and a professional/personal integration occurred during this five year period.

Findings suggested that learning to operate in this mode also worked to bring about changes in people attending my courses. So that where people could negotiate to learn skills which they saw as important; where data on their own performance was available for public evaluation; and when a personal commitment to change was publicly made - then changes in their behaviour occurred.

I think now that the stating and restating where people were up to at Lopdell became a review process, public evaluation and a public commitment to change.

The knowledge shared also became part of the common consciousness and those coming in acquired it, so they belonged, they could get started straight away and those going out still belonged. They could take it with them and could disseminate it.

People worked all sorts of odd hours. I said do what your heart tells you - so people felt free in one way to come and go but commitment to the group and the task was great so all activities merged into one in a way that I can now see is very important.

The final document is probably ten percent of what was written but for us it was like a cut and polished diamond of great beauty.

As I see it everyone needs the opportunity to cut and polish their own stone. Implementation is easy when psychological ownership is there - this will require a process where people are helped to own the curriculum objectives, charter and national guidelines.

Anything imposed is likely to encourage negative feelings, sabotage and guerilla warfare. It will be resisted.

Implementation of an early childhood education curriculum may be a case where each group has to find, cut and polish its own diamond every time.

THE CURRICULUM

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD STATEMENT

PREPARED AT
LOPDELL CENTRE, AUCKLAND
15-19 FEBRUARY 1988

As an early childhood group:

We affirm that it is the right of each and every child of Aotearoa to be enriched in an environment which acknowledges and incorporates the values and language of the tangata whenua.

We affirm the right of each and every child to happiness, health and respect so that their full potential will be developed within a caring environment.

We affirm the belief that high quality early childhood education benefits children, families and society.

We believe that access to quality early childhood education services is a universal right of children and families.

This report is based on these convictions.

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM

The curriculum is the sum total of all children's direct and indirect learning experiences in early childhood settings.

Developing the curriculum involves deciding what these experiences will be.

BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM

The curriculum will enable all children to experience an environment in which:

1 They learn who they are.
2 They are safe.

3 They are healthy.
4 They relate positively to others.
5 They enjoy themselves.
6 They learn in appropriate ways.
7 They respect the natural environment.
8 There are goals for children.
9 Learning is not limited by gender.
10 Learning is not limited by race or colour.
11 Decision making is shared.
12 Conflict is resolved peacefully.
13 The importance of home and family is recognized.
14 Adults are learners.
15 People are accountable

BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM

The group identified fifteen principles as basic to the curriculum of any early childhood setting in New Zealand.

The curriculum will enable all children to experience an environment in which:

1. THEY LEARN WHO THEY ARE

So that all children can develop a feeling of self-worth, they must learn to understand, appreciate and be confident in their own culture, the culture of the tangata whenua and the culture of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

2. THEY ARE SAFE

Safeguards must ensure that children are not hurt physically, emotionally or socially and do not experience abuse or discrimination.

3. THEY ARE HEALTHY

All aspects of health, mental, physical and spiritual, must be given equal value to enable the well-being of children and adults. Practices such as balanced nutrition, medical care, stress-management and positive attitudes to self will enhance this growth and development.

4. THEY RELATE POSITIVELY TO OTHERS

Children need a positive environment. This encourages them to develop fully as individuals and as members of their community. Children must witness and experience relationships which are positive, peaceful and affirmative.

5. THEY ENJOY THEMSELVES

Effective learning is satisfying. It can be challenging and disturbing. It can also excite and stimulate. It can be fun.

6. THEY LEARN IN APPROPRIATE WAYS

The environment must facilitate children's curiosity, active exploration and self-paced and directed learning. The importance and power of play must be recognized. There must be time for children to think and dream.

7. THEY RESPECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We, as guardians, have a responsibility to conserve our world and make sure that our children enjoy, witness, respect and experience first-hand the beauty of their environment. Conservation is an important principle to be learned at an early age.

8. THERE ARE GOALS FOR CHILDREN

Careful on-going observation of children's developmental progress will enable adults to establish appropriate goals for children's learning and to provide a responsive environment in which children experience both success and challenge and where the potential of all experience for learning is recognized.

9. LEARNING IS NOT LIMITED BY GENDER

Learning should encompass and take realistic account of women's experiences and attitudes as well as men's.

10. LEARNING IS NOT LIMITED BY RACE OR COLOUR

The curriculum shall honour the promise of the Treaty of Waitangi to the Maori people on Maori language and culture. It will recognize, respect and respond to the aspirations of the tangata whenua and all cultures which make up the society of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

11. DECISION MAKING IS SHARED

Information is shared and decisions are made on a consensus basis involving staff, children and parents. In this way people are empowered.

12. CONFLICT IS RESOLVED PEACEFULLY

The future of our world may well depend on our ability to resolve conflicts peacefully. The process of peaceful resolution is learned through role modelling and direct teaching of skills. It is important that children witness and experience these behaviours.

13. THE IMPORTANCE OF HOME AND FAMILY IS RECOGNIZED

Early childhood education is a partnership between other adults and the family. It must provide a support system which acknowledges and respects 'parents' as the prime educators. On-going communication and interaction between the home and early childhood setting can positively foster children's learning.

14. ADULTS ARE LEARNERS

Recognition must be given to the importance of learning as a life-long process and the relationship between on-going adult learning and increased quality of experience for children.

15. PEOPLE ARE ACCOUNTABLE

Children have the right to implementation of these fifteen basic principles in any early childhood setting.

PARTICIPANTS

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PRINCIPLES BEHIND NATIONAL GUIDELINES

Anne Meade

1. The Working Group on Early Childhood Care and Education, as one of its tasks set by Cabinet Social Equity Committee, considered the roles and responsibilities of government, community and family. We concluded that there are clearly identifiable areas of responsibility for early childhood care and education (ECCE) at each level - family, community and government - which are interrelated. We were of the view that the family or whanau is the main focus of ECCE, but that some essential features of early childhood services are beyond what families can reasonably be expected to provide - the active assistance of the community and government is required to look after the interests of children. And, in so doing, the interests of parents, whanau and society are promoted.

2. One identified area of responsibility for government is to provide the legislative and/or regulatory framework for standards for the complementary care and education of children.

3. The working group accepted that government as a partner in the process of formulating guidelines aimed at achieving quality care and education for young children in New Zealand, would ask that they fit them into wider social compacts; that is:

- those guidelines should be shaped to fit with international statements on the rights of the child. (The one we chose to adapt came from the International Year of the Child, 1979; but the United Nations is currently formulating a Convention which contains far more detail and will come to New Zealand for ratification in the not too distant future);

- those guidelines be in accord with the spirit and principles of the Treaty of Waitangi; and should allow different cultural groups to develop charters that are culturally appropriate and effective.

4. The working group recommended that the national guidelines should be about:

- a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for children's learning,
- parent involvement that benefits children and supports parents/whanau,
- variables that are known to enhance the potential and quality of life of young children.

NATIONAL GUIDELINES, LICENCES AND CHARTERS

5. The working group has advocated an overturning of existing regulations for the early childhood sector.

6. Nested within the national guidelines would be sets of non-negotiable standards. These would have the power of regulations behind them. They would encompass such things as staff qualifications, ratio of staff, minimum space, health and fire safety requirements.

7. All services would have to comply with these regulations, whether or not they sought a charter and bulk funding. Those that did not opt for a charter would have to have a licence, rather like the current Child Care Centre Licence. In addition, all services would have to comply with other requirements in the wider regulatory environment; for example, with awards covering their staff and with the Labour Relations Act.

8. In my view, a distinguishing characteristic for charter items that are additional to those that are in the core regulations would be that they are items where accountability is as much to the community as it is to the state (in the form of the Ministry of Education). The items would be 'givens', but the means would be worked by the boards of trustees. The boards would 'own' the decisions about how to go about providing, say, parent education.

9. Thus, the more negotiable items for charters would ask that early childhood boards of trustees record what and how they are going to do the things on the list - such as in-service training. In addition, the charters would need to state how the boards would demonstrate to the community and to the Ministry that they had met their objectives for children, staff and/or parents or whanau in respect of each item.

10. We did not get into the detail of the guidelines, although we were clear about the inclusion of certain things to do with safety, and we added one firm recommendation that parent education be mandated by government.

11. The detail as to what should be in the core regulations and what should be in the more negotiable list in the national guidelines, we felt, is more properly the province of providers and the Department of Education to negotiate - if Government accepts our working group's proposals about charters within national guidelines. We did believe, however, that the process for developing national guidelines for early childhood services should be quite separate from the working group(s) developing national guidelines for schools.

12. I might add that we could not decide whether one set of regulations and guidelines would work for both centre-based and home-based care and education, or whether two would be needed. It may well be that there should be no artificial barriers to combined provision and that such integration should not be constrained by administrative/funding barriers.

13. The first task of those developing charters - staff and board members - would be to state their goals and philosophy. This would be the most important thing to set down. Then their objectives should be in line with those goals for each of the items on the list. In addition, the boards would have to decide on how they propose to demonstrate that their objectives have been attained for the children, the staff and parents and whanau.

14. Objectives fall into two different categories - performance and achievement objectives. The former says that some behaviour will occur and how often, but achievement objectives go beyond that to stating outcomes with timelines and indicators of achievement. There is an issue that could arise here that needs considerable reflection - that is, what to do when parents go down the track of seeking inappropriate outcomes, like test scores!

15. Staff in the Early Childhood Development Unit, according to our model, would be there to help boards and staff to shape up their charters, to select the appropriate type of objectives and to develop an understanding of what indicators show that quality care and education has been attained. They would be there to stand alongside and support boards, not to pass judgement on them.

Kia ora koutou.
Anne Meade
Convenor

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER - CHOICES INVOLVED
Valerie Burns

TOPIC	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Biculturalism	Maori leadership Understanding Tolerance	Pakeha insecurity Lack of knowledge	Bicultural nation New knowledge New understanding	Prejudice Insecurity Feelings of inferiority
	Bilingual	Monolingual	Bilingual people	Not enough bicultural people
Co-ordination	A common thread throughout all programmes A sense of unity A sense of common purpose	Possible sameness Competition Energies diverted in too many directions	Identify special nature/ character A stronger early childhood service A sense of unity and support	Single purpose centres which are too narrow in focus Rivalry Exclusion of some groups
Process	Chance to do it the ECE way The tradition of grass roots involvement Warmth Inclusion and acceptance of all people Valuing people in spite of difference A practice of involvement in consultation	Not understood by people outside ECE No tolerance of difference A failure to listen	Demonstrate that the ECE way works Group cohesion and involvement New and emergent leadership	The time and effort required for group consultation and grassroots involvement is too difficult
Flexibility	Broad based to enable a flexible approach to services	Too flexible so that basic minimum standards are lost	Diversity	Conservatism

Inclusive	Unity	Not flexible enough to accommodate all early childhood services Exclusive	Acknowledgment of diversity Listen to others Accommodate diverse community groups	Do not listen to certain groups So diverse that common standards lost
Terminology	Must be clear, plain, simple & easy to understand. Enunciate key principle for quality	Too tight Too restrictive	Clarify what is meant by ECE Enunciate goals of ECE Give a public explanation of quality	Too restrictive Limitation of words
Media	Better informed public	Prejudice Old attitudes	Lay an exciting foundation for the future Ability to publicly explain values of ECE	Not understood by the public Past attitudes die slowly Incorrect information
People	Demonstrate and use their skills Gain confidence Give status	Lack confidence Former low status	Development of a new group of informed & competent people New career possibilities	Not enough people with sufficient background
Curriculum	A chance for a new look at a broad based, comprehensive curriculum Identification of key experiences for the development of young children	Insufficient research	Research Resource development Career opportunities	A too narrow and restrictive approach taken
Management	A core of experienced people	Too few people to cope with new demands	New training opportunities Development of consultancies New ways of organization New ways of delivery	Insufficient resources

Professional Support	Kindergarten Senior Teacher Scheme Playcentre model of co-operative support Traditional model of community utilization of people's skills	Not enough people to meet the demands	Sharing of knowledge and skills across services	Self interest
Access	ECE services which meet family/community needs. Small units which are responsive to local community. Sufficient funding to enable access.	Lack of leadership to initiate new services Lack of adequate co-ordinated planning Lack of sufficient funds Some groups too stressed to initiate services	Ability for all NZ families to gain access to early childhood services New ways of providing services	Too few human and material resources
Equity	NZ Government philosophical commitment to equity Royal Commission on Social policy Government social reform programme	A too hard concept to achieve NZ economy	Innovative ways of achieving equity	Self interest Insufficient knowledge Failure of policy to achieve its objectives
Human Rights	Human Rights Commission NZ character	Conversatism Prejudice	A chance for minority groups & opinions	Self interest
Industrial Relations	NZ Free Kindergarten Teachers Association Early Childhood Workers Union NZ tradition of worker involvement Traditional voluntary & paid employment co-operation in ECE	Low status, low pay Voluntary component	Improved conditions for employees New & emergent leadership	Insufficient cohesion

Intimate ECE Landscapes	Provision for outdoor play space in early childhood centres Environmental requirements in kindergarten regulations & childcare regulations	Threat from commercial enterprise because of cost of land Land utilization Land cost	Insurance of natural environment for tomorrows children Maintenance of some green areas within urban development Environments suitable for young children	Economics money versus children
Accountability	An open explicit system of accountability Past record of value for money People outcomes	Important values not able to be sufficiently measured Weak accountability measures Inappropriate criteria	More appropriate & people value systems of accountability developed	Too hard task Accountability measured in economic terms only
Training	Integrated Flexible Across the board Portable Overseas comparability Wide job opportunities Parity with other teacher trainings 0-8 year spectrum Existing models of field-based training	Not service specific Length of training time Non-specialist Self interest Lack of professinalism	Broaden knowledge base Greater understanding between services Wider skill & knowledge base A co-ordinated system with flexible delivery A professional approach A code of ethics or conduct	Self interest Length of training time Too narrow Inappropriate professionalism Lack of adequate funding

QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS

1. Why develop national guidelines?
2. Who are the national guidelines for?
3. What should they cover?
4. How will we achieve their development?

A VIEW FROM TE KOHANGA REO

Henrietta Maxwell
Te Kohanga Reo Trust

Henrietta Maxwell (Ngati Porou), a mother and a grandmother, spoke of her involvement with Te Kohanga Reo since its beginnings in 1982 when she participated in setting up the first Kohanga Reo, the Pukeatua Kokiri Centre in Wainuiomata. As well as giving practical examples of how a whanau Maori environment is provided for young children, Henrietta spoke about Te Kohanga Reo within Iwi Development.

The paper, *Te Kohanga Reo Within Iwi Development: Area of Influence on Young Persons 10-14 Years & 15-19 Years in any community* describes the aims and directions of Te Kohanga Reo from birth to 5 years, and its influence on young people through to 14 years of age and beyond. Henrietta Maxwell referred to the aims, principles, process, key concerns, and recommendations contained in the paper, and these are outlined below.

1. **Principles:**

Te Kohanga Reo is a total immersion Te Reo Maori programme for children from birth to 5 years of age in a whanau Maori environment where love and care spring from the whanau.

Fundamental to the programme is the collective whanau responsibility for decision making in terms of operation, programme development, management, administration and implementation.

Whanau control and proper accountability procedures for programme, resources, funding, whanau growth and development, will be maintained.

2. **Process:**

Kohanga Reo taps into an ageless power of cultural form based on whanaungatanga, whenua, wairua, Te Reo, upon which the nature and characteristics of iwi/whanau cohesion persist to influence the action and reaction of the environment on parent and child.

Focus on mokopuna, kaumatua and fluent speakers of Te Reo. Collective whanau participation at all levels including siblings, parents, relatives and community.

3. **Key:**

By addressing the needs of the mokopuna.

By Whanau, collective group activity and respecting the individual contribution, time, effort, skills to the whanau are acknowledged.

By practical production, and positive planning, mokopuna are embraced within whanau care and industry - these shall include music, drama, dance art.

4. **Note:**

This paper addresses the position of Kohanga and its influence 10-14 year olds and young adults in any community.

THE AIMS AND POSITION OF TE KOHANGA REO

1. The mokopuna speaks Maori.

2. All whanau skills are valued, recognized from preparing kai, to caring, providing, building etc. and use of Te Reo.

3. The physical health and growth, well-being of the child is paramount to their learning of sounds, values, skills.

4. Whanau learning within the iwi area on aspects that support the mokopuna.

5. Training programmes are whanau managed and administered and providers under REAC/MACCESS.

6. Employment within Kohanga for whanau is supported for both voluntary workers and paid according to whanau ability.

7. Accommodation, preferred base is the Marae, Kokiri, whanau owned facilities.

8. Leisure time within the Kohanga whanau is a positive sharing of relationships and activity.

9. Transition to School, community etc. By whanau consent and maintained responsibility.

10. Social Environment around the mokopuna is whanau directed.

Note:

Te Kohanga Reo programme will continue to grow to accommodate over 35,000 Maori children under 5 years of age with iwi, hapu, community, government support.

Recommendations:

1. That there be equity in management, employment and representation, at all levels by Te Kohanga Reo whanau in iwi and community development programmes.

2. That whanau be involved in consultations, decision making, implementation processes.

3. That the Marae training includes Maori/whanau contributions in the Maori 'Institute of Learning' and is the appropriate centre for cultural learning under iwi, hapu, whanau management.

4. That the mana of the iwi/hapu/whanau to manoeuvre families through difficult times be acknowledged with equitable resource and partnership support, from government and non-government agencies.

5. That in the interim, the Te Kohanga Reo Trust be acknowledged as a resource, funding conduit for General Access training and joint venture on job training/employment programmes linking to iwi authorities and community.

NOTES FROM AFTERNOON'S DISCUSSION

Where to From Here?

After lunch we broke into four groups to discuss the four major issues which had emerged from the presentations. These were:

1. What needed to go into the national guidelines, particularly the core guidelines?
2. What was the most appropriate process and timeframe in which to develop the national guidelines?
3. What resources/support would individual services need to develop their charters?
4. In a management by objectives environment, what objectives were appropriate for early childhood services?

Each group reported back before our final discussion.

Group 1 outlined an appropriate process of developing the national guidelines. They saw:

a) a need for someone to collate the principles and regulatory documents of early childhood education services into a working document.

b) This working document would then go to a group of creative thinkers in the early childhood world who would develop the document further, and then take it on a national road show (similar to the successful one undertaken by the Ministry of Women's Affairs) to ensure adequate consultation with the grassroots.

c) One spin-off of the road show would be that it would give people at the local level skills to help them develop their own charters.

d) The group recommended that the Families and Early Childhood Advisory Committee write to Dr. Ballard, Chief Executive of the Department of Education with its suggestions, if they met with the agreement of the rest of the seminar.

Group 2 had these suggestions for inclusion in the core national guidelines:

* *Curriculum Objectives* - based on 1988 Lopdell meeting, with further discussion.

* *Staffing Ratios* - Improved from current regulations, e.g. 1:3 under 18 months; 1:6 between 2-3 years old, and 1:10 for over 3 years.

* *Maximum Group Size* - 30 for new centres; existing centres over this size could remain larger, with encouragement to drop numbers.

* *Minimum Group Size* - to receive funding, balanced with the desirability of catering for needs where they exist, even if numbers are small.

* *Training* - So important to have trained staff that training should not be left to chance, or to boards who may not be convinced of the value of training.

* *National Award Structure and Negotiating System for Staff*

* *Staff representation on Boards* - elected by staff.

* *Principles of health and safety; gender and race equity; no corporal punishment.*

* *Monitoring of Charter included in Charter*

* *Separation of staffing component in the bulk funding amount* - to ensure quality of pay and conditions for staff.

* *No bulk funding (government subsidy) to profit-making businesses*

The Implementation Process: This group felt that decisions on the working party report still rested with the Minister and Cabinet, and that comments on the process should go to the Minister.

It was important to have specific early childhood working parties, rather than including early childhood within existing implementation groups. Representation from early childhood groups was important. Possible working parties included:

- National guidelines
- Funding
- Property
- Training

- Early Childhood Development Unit

Group 3 supported Group 2's items for the core national guidelines. In addition, their discussion had raised these aspects for inclusion:

* *'Child landscapes'* - the importance of including access to both in and outdoor space in the health and safety guidelines.

* *Parent education* - including ongoing training for Boards of Trustees.

* *Biculturalism*

* *Provision for Special Needs education.*

* *Review of National Guidelines* - A regular mechanism for review and renegotiation with early childhood services.

Link with national guidelines of other education sectors, particularly Teachers' Colleges.

Core national guidelines should be general but comprehensive, with qualification for the different services

They had also talked about the lack of a clear channel for professional input into services, and the possibility of a fee ceiling to ensure that funding went to maintaining/improving the quality of services.

They felt that the working parties should also look at staff ratios and equipment.

Group 4 also felt that the **core guidelines** should be broad, with separate scenarios for different services derived from them. Core items included health and safety, staffing ratios (improved from the present), a national salary structure, a directive to the Ministry of Education to ensure the supply of adequate in and preservice training, and a curriculum including bicultural and antisexist principles.

The national guidelines should be seen as the teeth in the system. Perhaps they could be based on the principle of the rights of the child's access to early childhood care and education (parallel with the Alma Ata declaration on rights to health).

Assessment of success of an early childhood service in terms of its objectives should include a look at parents' needs as well as children's. Starting points for a litmus test of good quality could be that 'the children are not being made unhappy/ the children are settled/ the family has a sense of wellbeing.'

The problem of parents assessing a service on the narrow criteria of school preparation was raised.

The **process** of implementation could be done by a working party on national guidelines working in tandem with a range of services developing their charters. This way the grassroots perspectives and needs could be built into the national level, and the process of charter formation developed.

The national guidelines should be reviewed every 2-3 years.

The general discussion which followed concentrated on the process of implementation, since it was felt that this would be the key to ensuring that the national guidelines were appropriate and useful.

It was agreed that the Families and Early Childhood Advisory Committee should write to the Minister of Education, expressing the need for separate early childhood working parties, participation in the working parties by people with current experience in the sector, and a suitable mechanism for consultation before finalization of the national guidelines.

Compiled by Cathy Wylie